

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment: Design Stage

December 2025

Land at Ratby Lane,
Markfield, Leicestershire

Prepared by
CSA Environmental

On behalf of
Taylor Wimpey UK Limited

Report No: CSA/2550/06

This report may contain sensitive ecological information. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to determine if this should be made publicly available.

| Report Reference | Revision | Date | Prepared by | Approved by | Comments |
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Residential development is proposed at Land off Ratby Lane, Markfield. Outline planning permission is sought from Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council which will be subject to the Biodiversity Gain Condition in accordance with paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

CSA Environmental was instructed by Taylor Wimpey UK Limited to undertake a 'Design Stage' Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA) of the proposed development. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool was used to determine pre- and post- development biodiversity values, and predict the net effect of the proposed development upon biodiversity.

Baseline habitats at the Site comprise arable cropland and modified grassland, bounded by a mix of woodland and mature hedgerows. The southern and western boundaries are designated as potential Local Wildlife Sites. No irreplaceable habitats are found on or adjacent to the Site.

Post-development habitats at the Site will comprise developed land; sealed surface of low distinctiveness, as well as modified and other neutral grassland, drainage features and new tree planting.

Off-site Biodiversity Units will be delivered through use of an off-site habitat bank or broken.

A net loss of biodiversity is predicted for the proposed development of -0.76 Habitat Units (-5.74%) and +2.73 Hedgerow Units (+32.19%) This is subject to retention of on-site woodland and modified grassland to the south of the Site. Approximately 2.09 Habitat Units will be provided off-site to achieve the required 10% net gain.

Subject to securing the above through relevant legal mechanisms the Biodiversity Gain Condition could be discharged following grant of consent through submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan template as drafted herein.

To assist Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council in their consideration of BNG and the proposed development, relevant statements have been set out in Box 1 in respect of applicable BNG policy and legal requirements.

Box 1. Biodiversity Net Gain Statements

Planning permission sought for the development, if granted, **would be subject to the Biodiversity Gain Condition** as set out within Section 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 given the following:

- Planning permission is applied for after 12 February 2024
- Planning permission does not relate to development consented prior to 12 February 2024 ('major developments') and subject to a 'Section 73' amendment, or comprise a Reserved Matters application pursuant to such consent
- Impacts to habitats are predicted on-site that either exceed 25 square metres per 5 linear metres with a value greater than zero, and/or impacts to any 'Section 41' habitat of principal importance
- Planning permission sought does not relate to a 'householder application' or 'the high-speed railway transport network'
- Planning permission is not for self-build or custom housebuilding and relates to more than 9 dwellings and/or proposals cover over 0.5ha
- Planning permission does not relate directly to off-site gain developments to fulfil other BNG requirements

The biodiversity value of on-site habitats set out herein relate to the date of the planning application and not an earlier date.

The biodiversity value of on-site habitats set out herein are not lower than on date of application.

On-site biodiversity gain proposed herein is significant based upon the following:

- Proposed habitats do include those of medium and higher distinctiveness comprising other neutral grassland, mixed scrub, woodland and tree planting

The Site does not contain irreplaceable habitat as defined under the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2024).

As set out herein measures have been taken in a step-wise fashion in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy to:

- First avoid adverse effects of the development upon on-site medium or higher distinctiveness habitat and, where they cannot be avoided, mitigate these effects;
- Taking an approach to first seek on-site habitat enhancement, then habitat creation
- Where above cannot fully compensate, seek registered off-site gains
- And finally, where off-site gains cannot be secured, seeking purchase of biodiversity credits

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by CSA Environmental on behalf of Taylor Wimpey UK Limited and sets out the findings of a 'Design Stage' Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment. Residential development is proposed at Ratby Lane, Markfield (hereafter 'the Site'). This report details the predicted net effect of the proposed development upon biodiversity.
- 1.2 This report has been prepared with due consideration for the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's guidance for design stage reporting on Biodiversity Net Gain (CIEEM, 2021). The report also takes into account wider CIEEM best-practice guidance (2017 & 2018), Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (Baker et al., 2019) and the Biodiversity: Code of Practice for Planning and Development, published by the British Standards Institute (BS 42020:2013).
- 1.3 The Site occupies an area of c. 6.9ha and comprises arable cropland and modified grassland, bounded by a mix of woodland and hedgerows (see Habitats Plan in Appendix A). The Site is located around central grid reference SK 495 095, located to the south-east of Markfield.
- 1.4 This report should be read in conjunction with the Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA) (CSA/2550/01) prepared for the proposed development which provides full baseline habitat information upon which the post-development biodiversity value set out herein is based.
- 1.5 This 'Design Stage' BNG Assessment aims to:
 - Confirm whether planning permission sought for the development, if granted, would be subject to the Biodiversity Gain Condition as set out within paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [see Box 1].
 - Provide information about "...the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the on-site habitat and any other habitat". Furthermore, evidence is provided as to how the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy, as set out in as set out in Article 37A of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, has been applied.
 - Establish the following using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation, which uses habitat as a proxy for biodiversity and comprises three separate modules (Habitat Units, Hedgerow Units & Watercourse Units):
 - 'pre-development' (baseline) biodiversity value of the Site
 - 'post-development' (post-intervention) biodiversity value of the Site
 - Any off-site biodiversity values (baseline & post-intervention)

- Net effect of the proposed development
- Whether relevant 'trading' rules and other controls have been accorded with
- Whether the Biodiversity Gain Objective (10%) is met or not
- State whether "...the biodiversity value of the on-site habitat will be lower on the date of application (or an earlier date) because of the carrying on of activities ('degradation') in which case the value is to be taken as immediately before the carrying on of the activities, and if degradation has taken place supporting evidence of this".
- State whether any on-site biodiversity provision is 'significant' and if so, how the specific gains would be secured for 30 years, in accordance with Paragraph 9, Schedule 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act (1990).
- Confirm the presence and location of any irreplaceable habitat at the Site, as set out in the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2024).
- Clearly identify any assumptions made or deviation from the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Guidance.
- Detail any legal frameworks for how Biodiversity Net Gain would be secured subject to grant of planning permission.

1.6 In accordance with Article 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 the following drawings have also been prepared:

- Baseline Habitats Plan (CSA/2550/124) provided in Appendix A
- Proposed Habitats Plan (CSA/2550/125) provided in Appendix B

2.0 PLANNING POLICY & LEGISLATION

2.1 The following legislation brings into force Schedule 14 of the Environment Act (2021), making Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) a condition of planning permission in England from 12 February 2024:

- The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2024
- The Biodiversity Gain Site Register (Financial Penalties and Fees) Regulations 2024
- The Biodiversity Gain Site Register Regulations 2024
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024
- The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024
- The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Environment Act 2021 (Commencement No. 7) Regulations 2023
- The Environment Act 2021 (Commencement No. 8 and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2024

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2024 (amended 2025) sets out existing government planning policies for England and how they should be applied. Chapter 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment, paragraph 187, states that the planning system and planning policies should minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity.

2.3 Accompanying the NPPF, central government guidance on the implementation of planning policies is set out within online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). That relating to the protection and enhancement of the Natural Environment was most recently updated in February 2025. The Natural Environment PPG addresses principles across a broad spectrum of topics targeting biodiversity conservation, from individual site and species protection through to the supporting of ecosystem services, and the use of local ecological networks to support the national Nature Recovery Network. In particular, the PPG promotes the delivery of measurable Biodiversity Net Gain through the creation and enhancement of habitats alongside development. The PPG also includes a section on Biodiversity Net Gain, which forms part of a suite of guidance in the Government's Biodiversity Net Gain Collection.

2.4 The following policy from the Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy makes reference to biodiversity and the protection and enhancement of priority habitats and species under Policy 20, and the Markfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2039

references habitats and species under Policy M4 (see EcIA Appendix B for full policies).

3.0 METHODS

Biodiversity Calculations

- 3.1 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra, 2024) was used to determine baseline (pre-development) and post-intervention (post-development) biodiversity values, and to calculate the net effect of the development upon biodiversity. Specifically, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool was populated and used to run all calculations present herein, and in accordance with the Statutory Metric User Guide (Defra, 2024).
- 3.2 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric uses habitat (vegetation and edaphic conditions) as a proxy for measuring biodiversity more widely. This reductive approach allows for the relative biodiversity 'value' of land to be calculated and expressed as transferrable 'Biodiversity Units'. The metric adopts the UK Habitat Classification (UK Hab; Butcher et al., 2023) system with some minor deviation.
- 3.3 The metric consists of a primarily 'Area' module which calculates 'Habitat Units' such as grassland, woodland and urban habitats, as well as two linear modules for 'Hedgerow Units' (including lines of trees) and 'Watercourse Units' (including rivers, canals and ditches). The separate Biodiversity Unit types cannot be converted between these modules and are addressed separately herein. For the purposes of this report watercourses modules were not populated given the absence of these linear features from the Site.
- 3.4 'Habitat trading' controls are integrated into the Statutory Metric to ensure any losses of habitat are mitigated or compensated for appropriately, in respect of conservation priorities and ecological functionality. Any deviation from habitat trading is cleared flagged within the Statutory Metric, and justifications, where necessary, are set out herein.
- 3.5 Any consideration of temporary impacts, those where habitats can be reinstated within 2 years of impacts as set out within the User Guide, will are explained in full herein.
- 3.6 A Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool has been prepared for the proposed development and is provided separately in full for interrogation by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, relevant consultees and stakeholders.
- 3.7 All metric calculations have been reviewed by Tom Richards MCIEEM who has completed numerous net gain assessments.

Baseline Habitats

- 3.8 The accompanying EclA report (CSA/2550/01) provides details of the UKHab survey undertaken at the Site on 18 March 2025 including full survey methods.
- 3.9 Baseline (pre-development) habitat areas and linear measurements were taken from the Baseline Habitats Plan (Appendix A) prepared in mapping software Quantum Geographic Information Systems (QGIS). Mapping is based upon field survey, topographical survey, aerial photography and OS mapping to an accuracy of 10m²/0.001ha (polygons) / 5m (linear)

Habitat & Hedgerow Condition Assessment

- 3.10 An assessment of habitat and hedgerow condition was undertaken on 04 June 2025 and 11 June 2025 by Becca King (FISC Level 3) and Alex Perry (FISC Level 4) in accordance with the Statutory Metric User Guide (Defra, 2024). Published condition assessment templates have been completed and are provided in Appendix D alongside wider condition information.

Post-Development Habitats

- 3.11 Post-development habitat areas and linear measurements were taken from the Proposed Habitats Plan (Appendix B) prepared in mapping software QGIS. This plan is based upon the Land Use Plan and Landscape Strategy Plan prepared by CSA Environmental (CSA/2550/118 and CSA/2550/128 respectively) on behalf of Taylor Wimpey UK Limited. Wider consideration of construction methods, future land-use and management were used to determine the extent of existing habitat loss/deterioration, retention/enhancement and creation which would occur-post development.
- 3.12 Professional judgement was required throughout the calculation process to ensure target habitats were reasonable, achievable and ecologically justified. Habitat condition for both enhanced and created habitats was assigned taking a precautionary approach and with consideration of biotic and operational phase conditions (i.e. those which may limit the extent to which 'good' condition is likely to be reached).

Strategic Significance

- 3.13 A desktop assessment was undertaken to determine relevant strategic significance multipliers for pre- and post-development habitats in accordance with Table 7 of the Statutory Metric User Guide (Defra, 2024).

Additionality & Wider Considerations

3.14 In accordance with the good practice principles as set out above, the following additional considerations have been given:

- Wider consideration of ecological functionality, with a qualitative ecological assessment presented herein
- Consideration of non-ecological stakeholders, such as end-users (e.g. residents) of the scheme and choices with regard to access and multi-functionality
- Identification of opportunities to deliver wider environmental gain (e.g. carbon sequestration, water quality and climate resilience) guiding habitat/design choices beyond certain ecological outcomes

Spatial Risk

3.15 When proposing off-site solutions to BNG, the Metric applies a 'Spatial Risk Multiplier'. The multiplier is based on whether the offset land is located within the same Local Planning Authority (LPA) or National Character Area (NCA) as the development site, or is "deemed to be sufficiently local, to the site of biodiversity loss". As the off-site land will be secured through a Habitat Bank or Broker, this category does not apply.

Assumptions & Limitations

3.16 Effort has been taken to ensure mapping, and measurements taken from mapping, are accurate to the level stated. However, given the nature of habitats, methods of field survey and the potential for inaccuracies in aerial photography and some other mapping, there remain some potential for errors in the calculations presented herein.

3.17 Professional judgement and a precautionary approach are required to establish baseline and post-development scenarios to assess current habitat type and condition, and to predict future changes. Accordingly outcomes for habitats and biodiversity more widely may differ from those presented herein.

3.18 Specific assumptions with regard to certain existing and proposed habitats have been identified where relevant throughout the report.

4.0 BASELINE BIODIVERSITY

4.1 For full habitat descriptions and species lists, please refer to the EcIA (CSA/2550/01) with baseline habitats illustrated on the Habitats Plan (Appendix A). Appendix C of this report sets out full details of habitat condition assessment including completed standard templates. Following comments from the Ecology Officer at Leicestershire County Council, this report now includes the woodland condition assessment information, which was not available at the time of submission.

Strategic Significance

4.2 There is no published Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Leicestershire. The following relevant alternative documents have been reviewed in respect of assigning significant strategic significance:

- Adopted Local Plan
- Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre
- Leicestershire Biodiversity Action Plan

4.3 Based on the above, the majority of baseline Habitat Units are assigned as 'Low' strategic significance with the exception of the following:

- Other woodland; broadleaved habitat due to its location adjacent to designated hedgerows and specification of this habitat within local policy (although not this woodland). It has been assigned as 'medium' strategic significance on this basis
- Hedgerows H1 and H2, designated as potential Local Wildlife Sites, identified as designations and considered to have 'high' strategic significance.

4.4 The above approach has also been adopted for post-intervention (post-development) habitat units as set out below.

Baseline Biodiversity Units

4.5 A summary of the on-site habitat areas and baseline Biodiversity Units, as calculated using the accompanying Statutory Biodiversity Metric are set out in Table 1 below. These include Habitat and Hedgerow Units.

Table 1. Summary of On-site Baseline Biodiversity Units

| HABITATS | | |
|--|------------------|----------------------|
| Habitat Type (Assumed Condition) | Area (ha) | Habitat Units |
| Cereal crops (Condition Assessment N/A) | 5.18 | 10.36 |
| Bramble scrub (Condition Assessment N/A) | 0.02 | 0.08 |
| Modified grassland (Poor) | 0.99 | 1.98 |
| Other woodland; broadleaved (Poor) | 0.19 | 0.76 |
| Total | 6.38ha | 13.18 |

| HEDGEROWS | | |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Hedgerow Type | Length (km) | Hedgerow Units |
| B1 Native hedgerow | 0.13 | 0.90 |
| B2 Species-rich native hedgerow with trees | 0.34 | 7.04 |
| B4 Native hedgerow | 0.09 | 0.18 |
| B5 Native hedgerow | 0.06 | 0.36 |
| Total | 0.62 | 8.48 |

*Area measurements attributed to 'individual trees' are not included in the total area as trees oversail other habitats.

5.0 POST-INTERVENTION BIODIVERSITY

5.1 Outline planning application with all matters except access reserved, for the erection of up to 135 dwellings, amenity space, areas for outdoor play, landscaping and all associated infrastructure.

5.2 Post-intervention habitats are illustrated on the Proposed Habitats Plan in Appendix B. This drawing is based upon development parameters set out within the Development Framework Plan prepared by CSA Environmental (CSA/2550/118). The following assumptions have been made with regard to these plans in line with the Statutory Metric User Guide (Defra, 2024) and professional judgement taking a precautionary approach where necessary:

- Residential development parcels are assumed to comprise 70% dwellings and built form, with 30% private gardens and incidental open space, netting out spine roads
- All individual trees are assumed to be 'small' in size, and in poor condition for 'urban'/street contexts and moderate condition for 'rural' contexts
- SuDS to be managed as 'moderate' condition basins that hold water
- Grassland around SuDS to comprise other neutral grassland in 'moderate' condition, and elsewhere within the scheme to comprise 'modified grassland' in poor condition.

5.3 On-site habitat retention, enhancement and creation set out below would be secured through control of detailed development/landscape design, a Habitat Management & Monitoring Plan (HMMP) and appropriate application of a planning condition or legal condition.

Habitat Retention & Enhancement

5.4 The majority of area habitats at the Site will be lost to development, comprising principally arable land. The grassland field to the south will be partially lost, and recreated to its current condition within two years and is therefore considered to be retained. The following habitats will be retained:

- 0.18ha of other broadleaved woodland (W1) will be retained
- Hedgerows B1 to B5 will be largely retained, with minor breaches in H1 and H2 for access

5.5 As set out within the accompanying EclA the retention of these habitats will require protections during construction and in operation through the following:

- Tree protection measures in line with standard arboricultural practice (BS5837: 2012)

- Construction Environmental Management Plan, to include standard pollution control measures to be implemented during construction
- Landscape and Ecology Management Plan

5.6 As set out within the Statutory Metric User Guide (Defra, 2024), where certain habitats can be reinstated to previous condition within two years of impact (i.e. temporary compound works) these are treated as 'retained', or where condition is improved as 'enhanced'. This applies to land within Field F2 where the outfall is proposed, as the condition of habitat will be reinstated to its existing condition.

Habitat Creation

5.7 As part of the proposed development a range of habitats will be created including residential dwellings and associated infrastructure, vegetated gardens and incidental greenspace, and habitat creation within open space to include grassland, woodland, thicket and SUDS.

Strategic Significance

5.8 An equivalent approach to strategic significance as been taken for post-intervention Biodiversity Units as for baseline units above, with all habitats having 'low' strategic significance.

5.9 Due to the small scale of the Site and location of habitats adjacent to the developable areas, all post-intervention baseline Habitat Units are assigned as 'Low' strategic significance.

Significant On-site Gain

5.10 The following proposed habitat enhancement and creation proposals are likely to be considered 'significant' by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council:

- Creation of habitats of medium distinctiveness, including other neutral grassland, individual trees and mixed scrub

5.11 In accordance with Paragraph 9, Schedule 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act (1990) these habitats contributing to significant on-site gains require additional mechanisms to secure their creation/enhancement and management over 30-years, such as through an appropriate planning condition and/or legal agreement in accordance with an on-site HMMP.

6.0 NET EFFECT ON BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity Units

6.1 The net effect on biodiversity as a result of the proposed development is set out within the accompanying Statutory Biodiversity Metric and summarised below in Tables 2A and 2B.

Table 2A. Net Effect on Biodiversity: Habitat Units

| | Habitat Units | % Change |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| On-site baseline | 13.26 | |
| On-site post-intervention | 12.49 | |
| On-site net change | -0.76 | -5.74% |
| Total net change | -0.76 | -5.74% |
| <i>Trading Rules Not Satisfied</i> | | |

Table 2B. Net Effect on Biodiversity: Hedgerow Units

| | Hedgerow Units | % Change |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| On-site baseline | 8.48 | |
| On-site post-intervention | 11.20 | |
| On-site net change | +2.73 | +32.19% |
| Total net change | +2.73 | +32.19% |
| <i>Trading Rules Satisfied</i> | | |

6.2 It is demonstrated that the proposed development will result in a net gain in excess of 10% for Hedgerow Units with all relevant trading rules satisfied, however there is a net loss for Habitat Units and the trading rules are not satisfied due to a loss of 'medium' and 'low' distinctiveness habitats.

7.0 MANAGEMENT & MONITORING

7.1 Full details of management and monitoring for delivery of on-site biodiversity gains will be provided within a Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan (HMMP) for a 30-year period. This HMMP will include the following principal elements:

- Establishment and management of the following 'significant' biodiversity gains:
 - Other neutral grassland and mix scrub within informal open spaces and SuDS features
- Adaptive management options
- Monitoring regime and reporting process
- Roles and responsibilities
- Processes to ensure remedial measures can be undertaken in the event that target habitat or condition is not achieved

7.2 Off-site biodiversity gains will be required, through purchase of units from a Habitat or Broker. To meet the mandatory 10% net gain, a total of 1.81 Units will be required of medium distinctiveness habitats.

8.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Planning permission sought for the proposed development will be subject to the Biodiversity Gain Condition in accordance with Schedule 14 of the Environment Act (2021).
- 8.2 As set out herein, a net loss in biodiversity is predicted as a result of the proposed development. However with the purchase of 1.81 Habitat Units from a Habitat Bank or Broker, the mandatory 10% net gain can be met. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool was used to calculate the following outcomes:
 - -0.76 Habitat Unit loss or -5.74%
 - +2.73% Hedgerow Unit gain or +32.19%
 - Trading rules for Hedgerow Units met, subject to deliver of species-rich hedgerows with trees. Trading rules for Habitat Units not satisfied.
- 8.3 Following any grant of planning permission an application to discharge the Biodiversity Gain Condition would be submitted completing a Biodiversity Gain Plan.
- 8.4 On-site significant biodiversity gain would be secured through an appropriate legal mechanism (as such planning condition) subject to an on-site HMMP for a 30-year period.

10.0 REFERENCES

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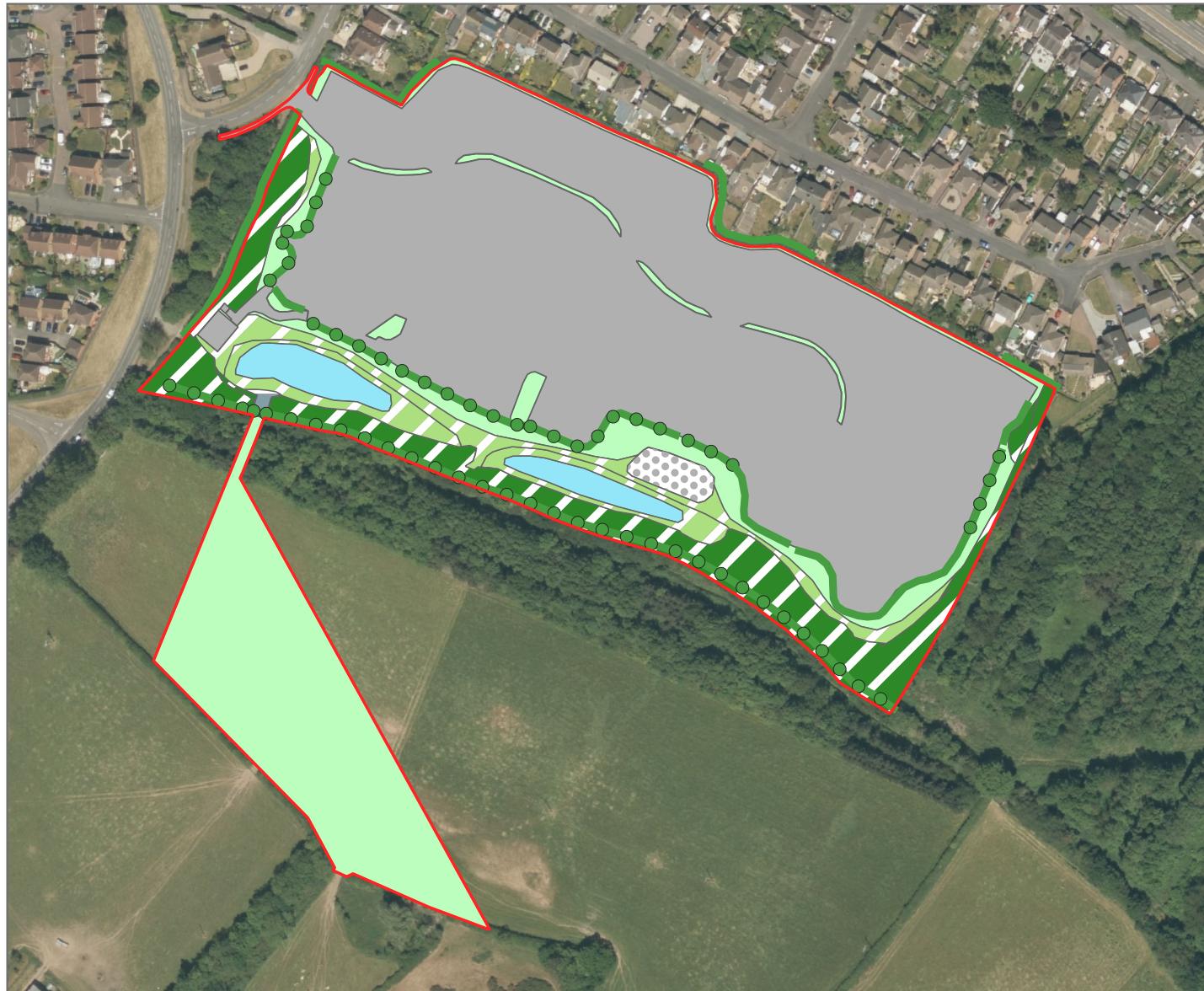
Appendix A
Baseline Habitats Plan



| | | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------|-------|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Project | Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield | Date | May 2025 | Drawing No. | CSA/2550/124 |
| Drawing Title | Baseline Habitats Plan | Scale | Refer to scale | Rev | D |
| Client | Taylor Wimpey UK Limited | Drawn | GG | Checked | AP |

Appendix B

Proposed Habitats Plan



0 50 100 m

Contains Bing maps © Microsoft 2024.
For reference purpose only. No further copies may be made.

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------|-------|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Project | Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield | Date | May 2025 | Drawing No. | CSA/2550/125 |
| Drawing Title | Proposed Habitats Plan | Scale | Refer to scale | Rev | E |
| Client | Taylor Wimpey UK Limited | Drawn | AP | Checked | TR |

Appendix C

Habitat & Hedgerow Condition Assessments

| On-site or off-site, site name and location | 2550 Markfield | | Survey date and Surveyor name | 04/06/2025 BK | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---------------|---|---|-------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Limitations (if applicable) | | | Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Condition Assessment Details | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A series of ten attributes, representing key physical characteristics are used for this assessment. Each attribute is assigned to one of five functional groups (A – E) and the condition of a hedgerow is assessed according to the number of attributes from these functional groups which pass or fail the 'favourable condition' criteria. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| This assessment is based on the Hedgerow Survey Handbook ¹ and Favourable Conservation Status document ² . For further clarification please refer to the Hedgerow Survey Handbook. Best practice would be to record the species, age, spacing and other key information about all trees present along a hedgerow within the 'Habitat Description' box, as well as other key features of the hedgerow. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hedgerow favourable condition attributes | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E) | Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition' | Criteria description | Habitat parcel reference | | | | | | | | | | |
| Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types | | | Criterion passed (Yes or No) | | | | Notes (such as justification) | | | | | | |
| A1. | Height | >1.5 m average along length | The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height). | Y | Y | N | Y | | | | | | |
| A2. | Width | >1.5 m average along length | The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and isolated trees. Outgrowths (such as blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height. Laid, coppiced, cut and newly planted hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). | Y | Y | N | Y | | | | | | |
| B1. | Gap - hedge base | Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length | This is the vertical 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth. Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook). | Y | N | Y | Y | | | | | | |
| B2. | Gap - hedge canopy continuity | Gaps make up <10% of total length; and No canopy gaps >5 m | This is the horizontal 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how small). Access points and gates contribute to the overall 'gappiness' but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate). | Y | Y | N | Y | | | | | | |
| C1. | Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation | >1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length: · Measured from outer edge of hedgerow; and · Is present on one side of the hedgerow (at least). | This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow. Undisturbed ground is present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1 m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedgerow. This criterion recognises the value of the hedgerow base as a boundary habitat with the capacity to support a wide range of species. Cultivation, heavily trodden footpaths, poached ground etc. can limit available habitat niches. | Y | Y | Y | Y | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--|--|---|---|------|------|------|------|
| C2. | Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation | Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground. | The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Gallium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold. | N | Y | N | N | |
| D1. | Invasive and neophyte species | >90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ³) and recently introduced species. | Recently introduced species refer to plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives. For information on archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website ⁴ , as well as the BSBI website ⁵ where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora' ⁶ contains an up-to-date list of the status of species. For information on invasive non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website ⁷ . | Y | Y | | | |
| D2. | Current damage | >90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities. | This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting). | Y | Y | | | |
| E1. | Tree class | There is more than one age-class (or morphology) of tree present (for example: young, mature, veteran and or ancient ⁸), and there is on average at least one mature, ancient or veteran tree present per 20 - 50m of hedgerow. | This criterion addresses if there are a range of age-classes or morphologies which allow for replacement of trees and provide opportunities for different species. | - | Y | - | - | |
| D2. | Tree health | At least 95% of hedgerow trees are in a healthy condition (excluding veteran features valuable for wildlife). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity. | This criterion identifies if the trees are subject to damage which compromises the survival and health of the individual specimens. | - | Y | - | - | |
| Condition | | | | | Good | Good | Poor | Good |

The hedgerow condition assessment generates a weighting (score) ranging from 1 - 3, which is used within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The scores for each are set out in the tables below.

Condition categories for hedgerows without trees

| Category | Category Requirements | Metric Score |
|------------------------|--|--------------|
| Good | No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group. | |
| Moderate | No more than 4 failures in total; AND Does not fail both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and C2 = Moderate condition). | |
| Poor | Fails a total of more than 4 attributes; OR Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition). | |
| Score achieved: | | |

Condition categories for hedgerows with trees

| Category | Category Requirements | Metric score |
|------------------------|--|--------------|
| Good | No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group. | |
| Moderate | No more than 5 failures in total; AND Does not fail both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1, C2 and E1 = Moderate condition). | |
| Poor | Fails a total of more than 5 attributes; OR Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition). | |
| Score achieved: | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| On-site or off-site, site name and location | | 2550 Markfield | Survey date and Surveyor name | 11/06/25 AP | |
| Limitations (if applicable) | | Habitat parcel reference | | | |
| | | Grid reference | | | |
| | | F2 | | | |
| Condition Assessment Criteria | | | Criterion passed (Yes or No) | Notes (such as justification) | |
| A | <p>There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.</p> <p>Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.</p> | | N | | |
| B | <p>Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.</p> | | N | | |
| C | <p>Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present).</p> <p>Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.</p> | | Y | | |
| D | <p>Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.</p> | | Y | | |
| E | <p>Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)².</p> | | Y | | |
| F | <p>Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.</p> | | Y | | |
| G | <p>There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA⁴).</p> | | Y | | |
| Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria) | | Condition Assessment Score | Score Achieved ✕/✓ | | |
| Passes 5 or 6 criteria | | Good (3) | | | |
| Passes 3 or 4 criteria | | Moderate (2) | | | |
| Passes 2 or fewer criteria | | Poor (1) | X | | |
| Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type. | | | | | |

| On-site or off-site, site name and location | 2550 Markfield (on-site) | | Survey date and Surveyor name | 11/06/25 AP |
|---|--|---|---|---------------------|
| Limitations (if applicable) | N/A | | Habitat parcel reference | W1 |
| Condition Assessment Criteria | | | | |
| Indicator | Good (3 points) | Moderate (2 points) | Poor (1 point) | Score per indicator |
| A Age distribution of trees | Three age-classes ¹ present. | Two age-classes ¹ present. | One age-class ¹ present. | 1 |
| B Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage | No significant browsing damage evident in woodland ² . | Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in less than 40% of whole woodland ² . | Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland ² . | 1 |
| C Invasive plant species | No invasive species ³ present in woodland. | Rhododendron Rhododendron ponticum or cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> not present, and other invasive species ³ <10% cover. | Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species ³ ≥10% cover. | 3 |
| D Number of native tree species | Five or more native tree or shrub species ⁴ found across woodland parcel. | Three to four native tree or shrub species ⁴ found across woodland parcel. | Two or less native tree or shrub species ⁴ across woodland parcel. | 3 |
| E Cover of native tree and shrub species | >80% of canopy trees and >80% of understorey shrubs are native ⁵ . | 50 - 80% of canopy trees and 50 - 80% of understorey shrubs are native ⁵ . | <50% of canopy trees and <50% of understorey shrubs are native ⁵ . | 3 |
| F Open space within woodland | 10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is permitted ⁷ . | 21 - 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . | <10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see Good category ⁷ . | 1 |
| G Woodland regeneration | All three classes present in woodland ⁸ ; trees 4 - 7 cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth. | One or two classes only present in woodland ⁸ . | No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland ⁸ . | 2 |
| H Tree health | Tree mortality 10% or less, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback ⁹ . | 11% to 25% tree mortality and/or crown dieback or low-risk pest or disease present ⁹ . | Greater than 25% tree mortality and/or any high-risk pest or disease present ⁹ . | 2 |
| I Vegetation and ground flora | Recognisable NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists. | Recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present. | No recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present. | 1 |
| J Woodland vertical structure | Three or more storeys across all survey plots, or a complex woodland ¹¹ . | Two storeys across all survey plots ¹¹ . | One or less storey across all survey plots ¹¹ . | 2 |
| K Veteran trees | Two or more veteran trees ¹² per hectare. | One veteran tree ¹² per hectare. | No veteran trees ¹² present in woodland. | 1 |
| L Amount of deadwood | 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and/or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ . | Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and/or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ . | Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and/or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ . | 2 |
| M Woodland disturbance | No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident ¹⁴ . | Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area, and/or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground ¹⁴ . | 1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment, and/or 20% or more of woodland area has damaged ground ¹⁴ . | 1 |
| Total Score (out of a possible 39) | | | 23 | |
| Condition Assessment Result | | Condition Assessment Score | Result Achieved | |
| Total score >32 (33 to 39) | | Good (3) | | |
| Total score 26 to 32 | | Moderate (2) | | |
| Total score <26 (13 to 25) | | Poor (1) | X | |

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